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Amendments to the Claims

These claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1 -- 12 (cancelled)

13. (original) A data signal comprising a plurality of data items, comprising:

- a field indicating the number of data items;
- the plurality of data items, each item including an identifier;
- characterized in that the plurality of identifiers form an ordered sequence, and in that the field indicating the number of data items comprises a first and a second subfield, said subfields representing the range of said sequence of identifiers.

14. (cancelled)

15. (cancelled)

16. (previously presented) An electromagnetic signal for use in a receiving device and embodying a plurality of data items, the data items comprising

- a field indicating the number of data items;
- the plurality of data items, each item including an identifier;

wherein

- the plurality of identifiers form an ordered sequence,
- the field indicating the number of data items comprises a first and a second subfield,
- said subfields represent the range of said sequence of identifiers.

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17. (previously presented) The signal of claim 16, wherein the first subfield represents a beginning of the range and the second subfield represents an end of the range.

18. (previously presented) The signal of claim 17, wherein the first and second subfields enable the receiving device to perform the following operations:

determining whether a stored set of data items is current and/or complete by comparing the first and second subfields with the identifiers; and

updating the stored set of data items, with reference to the first and second subfields, in response to determining that the stored set of data items is not current and/or complete, whereby such updating is not conducted unnecessarily when the stored set of data items is still current and/or complete;

other operations can be performed in lieu of such unnecessary updating; and the identifiers need not be changed as the range of data items currently transmitted changes.

19. (previously presented) The signal of claim 16, wherein the data items are for use in a television.

20. (previously presented) The signal of claim 19, wherein the data items are for use in an electronic program guide for a television.

21. (previously presented) The signal of claim 16, wherein the subfields are modulo-N numbers, where N is the maximum number of data items to be kept track of at a given time.

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22. (previously presented) An electromagnetic signal embodying a plurality of data items, the data items comprising

a field indicating the number of data items;

the plurality of data items, each item including an identifier;

wherein

the plurality of identifiers form an ordered sequence,

the field indicating the number of data items comprises a first and a second subfield, said subfields representing the range of said sequence of identifiers,

the first subfield represents a beginning of the range and the second subfield represents an end of the range,

the first and second subfields are for use in a receiving device in order to enable the receiving device to perform the following operations:

determining whether a stored set of data items is current and/or complete by comparing the first and second subfields with the identifiers; and

updating the stored set of data items, with reference to the first and second subfields, in response to determining that the stored set of data items is not current and/or complete, whereby

such updating is not conducted unnecessarily when the stored set of data items is still current and/or complete;

other operations can be performed in lieu of such unnecessary updating; and

the identifiers need not be changed as the range of data items currently transmitted changes.

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23. (previously presented) The signal of claim 22, wherein the data items relate to television programming.